



Disaster and Crisis studies
A resilience perspective, forms of organizing and innovation

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Outline


Introduction

1. The disaster myth
2. Two governance doctrines and their consequences
3. Disaster resilience
4. New forms of organizing and digital innovation

Conclusion and Discussion

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The organizational / governance perspective



Catastrophe & Culture
The Anthropology of Disaster

School of American Research Advanced Seminar Series

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Disasters are multidimensional and experienced differently by different groups and individuals.

The *organizational sciences perspective* is useful in making social relations explicit, and to study interactions, processes and coordination practices.

The *governance perspective* is important to understand legitimacy, accountability and transparency (and learning?) in disaster decision making.

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Agenda for research and teaching

governments
formal authorities
national, regional and global

Governance:
coordination, information
sharing, decision making,
co-ownership

formal response
organizations
humanitarian sector

citizens
civil society
social movements
private sector

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- Sensemaking
- Decision making
- Meaningmaking
- Accounting
- Learning

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1. The Myth of Control

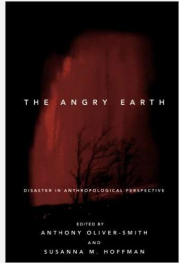
Disaster myths:

- panic occurs
- breakdown of social order
- people are looting
- hesitancy to evacuate
- people are helpless victims

Governmental administrations and formal rescue organizations tend to fall back on a control model and request for instruments and techniques in order to stay in control: *elite panic*.

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The myth as mobilizing story



A sense of *communitas* occurs in human societies during times of natural disaster. Disaster *communitas* has similarities to ritual *communitas* as people consciously ritualize their actions during disaster.

While this sacralization of practical action serves to optimize disaster response, it also creates an expanded sense of self, community, and purpose that can leave survivors of disaster with a sense that they have undergone a *meaningful experience*.

Powley, E. H., & Piderit, S. K. (2008). Tending wounds: Elements of the organizational healing process. *The Journal of Applied Behavioral Science*, 44(1), 134-149.

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Crisis/disaster governance

Crisis ('good') governance is the process by which a social entity (society/organization/community) deals with a disruptive and unexpected event that threatens to harm the social entity or its members:

- Who are the stakeholders !? (legitimacy)
- Who is responsible for what !? (accountability)
- Who is in charge of what !? (transparency)

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Chaos or more or less stable patterns of social behavior?

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TWO PERSPECTIVES IN CRISIS GOVERNANCE

How can we understand how formal authorities act before, during and after a disaster?

- **'C-3': Chaos, Command, Control**
- **'3-C': Continuity, Coordination, Cooperation**

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'C3': Chaos, Command & Control
(Quarantelli and Dynes, 1977)

Doctrine

- Disasters cause **'chaos'**: command & control is required to bring the situation back to normal
- War analogy: *'disasters are the enemy and must be approached as such'*

Organization

- Paramilitary organizations are most effective in dealing with disasters: top-down approach
- Civil institutions are not capable of adequately dealing with disasters, because of their ineffective command structures

Question: how are citizens/inhabitants seen from this perspective?

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Metaphors Matter (Tierney, et al. 2006)

Troops begin **combat operations** in New Orleans to fight **'insurgents'**.

"This place is going to look like **Little Somalia**," Brig. Gen. Gary Jones, commander of the Louisiana National Guard's Joint Task Force told Army Times Friday as hundreds of armed troops under his charge prepared to launch a **massive citywide security mission** from a staging area outside the Louisiana Superdome. "We're going to go out and **take this city back**. This will be a **combat operation** to get this city under **control**."



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EARTHQUAKES IN NEPAL 2015



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Coordinated spontaneous actions Valencia



Foto Kai Forsterling / EPA

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'3-C': Continuity, Coordination & Cooperation

- Doctrine
 - We can see '**continuity**' at times of disasters: behavior doesn't change much nor does panic emerge
 - Social structures are shaken but often not compromised and in-action
- Organization
 - Shared operational facilities and use liaison structures: bottom up approach
 - Improvisation and coordination of actions

Question: how are citizens/inhabitants seen from this perspective?

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CITIZENS AS SEEN FROM THE 3-C PERSPECTIVE

Societal resilience:
people start to solve the problems at hand, rely upon local knowledge, inform one another, relying on social capital:

- They are vulnerable but not passive victims
- They have agency: expertise is embodied in/by local communities
- They are co-owners and providers of information (e.g. about vulnerabilities)

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DISASTER RESILIENCE

Public Administration: Resilience is the capacity of a social system to *proactively adapt to and recover* from disturbances that are perceived within the system to fall *outside the range of normal and expected disturbances*. (Comfort, Boin & Demchak (2010). *Designing Resilience. Preparing for Extreme Events*, p. 9).

Organization Sciences: The ability of social entities to *absorb the impacts of external and internal system shocks* without losing the ability to *function*, and failing that, *adapt, and recover* from those shocks. (Tierney (2014). *Producing Disasters, Promoting Resilience*, p. 6).

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INTERNATIONAL DIMENSION: DISASTER RISK REDUCTION

The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 (Sendai Framework) is the first major agreement of the post-2015 development agenda, with seven targets and four priorities for action. It was endorsed by the UN General Assembly following the 2015 Third UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (WCDRR).

7 GLOBAL TARGETS	Reduce Mortality global population 2020-2030 Average vs. 2005-2015 Average	Increase Countries with national & local DRR strategies 2020 Value vs. 2015 Value
	Affected people/ global population 2020-2030 Average vs. 2005-2015 Average	International cooperation to developing countries 2030 Value vs. 2015 Value
	Economic loss/ global GDP 2030 Value vs. 2015 Value	Availability and access to multi-hazard early warning systems & disaster risk information and assessments 2030 Value vs. 2015 Value
	Damage to critical infrastructure & disruption of basic services 2030 Values vs. 2015 Values	

<https://www.unisdr.org/we/coordinate/sendai-framework>

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Two topics

- 1) New forms of organizing:
 - coordination of spontaneous volunteers

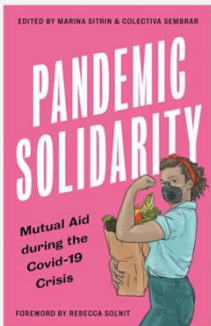
- 2) Innovations in disaster management:
 - social media and crowd sourcing

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Grassroot initiative housing of refugees/statusholders in 2015/16



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The same happened in Rome...


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COORDINATION : EXAMPLE FROM THE RED CROSS



23 F www.Ready2Help.nl 

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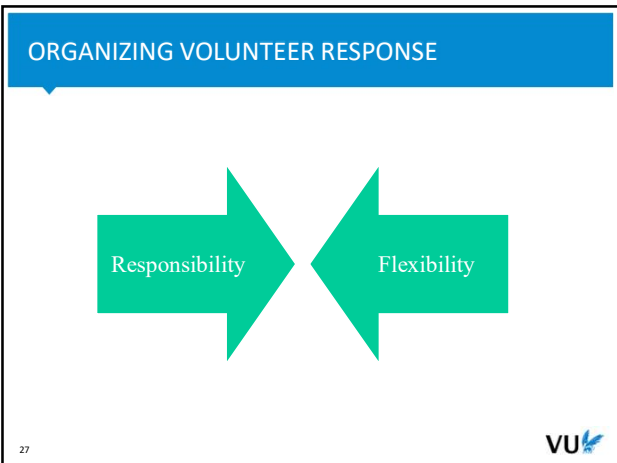
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USHAHIDI: DIGITAL TESTIMONIES

<https://www.usahidi.com/>

How Ushahidi maps the voices of those in need



Since its founding by Juliana Rotich in 2008 as a tool to monitor and map post-election violence in Kenya, Ushahidi's crowdsourcing tools have been used by thousands of groups and millions of people to raise voices, inform decisions, stop suffering and influence change.

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The next generation digital humanitarians

Building effective 'early warning systems' (EWS) and 'early action'.

Depending on:

- connecting local with global data
- collective information ownership





<https://510.global/>

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Social Resilience = Adaptive Capacity

Governance challenges lie in the collaboration between existing response organizations emergent groups, and local communities.

Since local communities continuously adapt to an environment in flux, their initiatives are hard to recognize, govern and support by formal response organizations.

How can disaster managers develop adaptive capacity to govern heterogeneous networks?

Adaptive leadership supposes interaction, collaboration and coordination in all phases of disaster risk management.



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And fortunate, the crisis management field starts to realize that new ways of thinking about leadership are needed...
